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ABSTRACT

Kansas City, Missouri, is one of six sites in a national demonstration project, Community Change for Youth Development (CCYD), which aims to increase basic developmental supports and opportunities available to youth age 12-20 years. The demonstration focuses on five basic elements: adult support and guidance, opportunities for involvement in decision making, support through critical transitions, opportunities for using work as a developmental tool, and provision of positive activities after school, in the evenings, on weekends, and during the summer. The lead agency is the YMCA of Greater Kansas City, a traditional youth-serving organization. Because of its considerable organizational capacity, the YMCA was successful in operating the CCYD initiative, quickly implementing activities and expanding to additional neighborhoods. The YMCA faced two challenges in implementing CCYD. Implementing the work as a developmental tool core concept proved difficult, and involving adult residents in the management and other aspects of CCYD programming, a key element of the initiative, also proved difficult. The YMCA of Greater Kansas City demonstrated that with commitment and the proper technical assistance, a traditional youth-serving agency can successfully lead a youth-focused, community-change effort that involves local citizens in oversight and in shaping program offerings. (SM)

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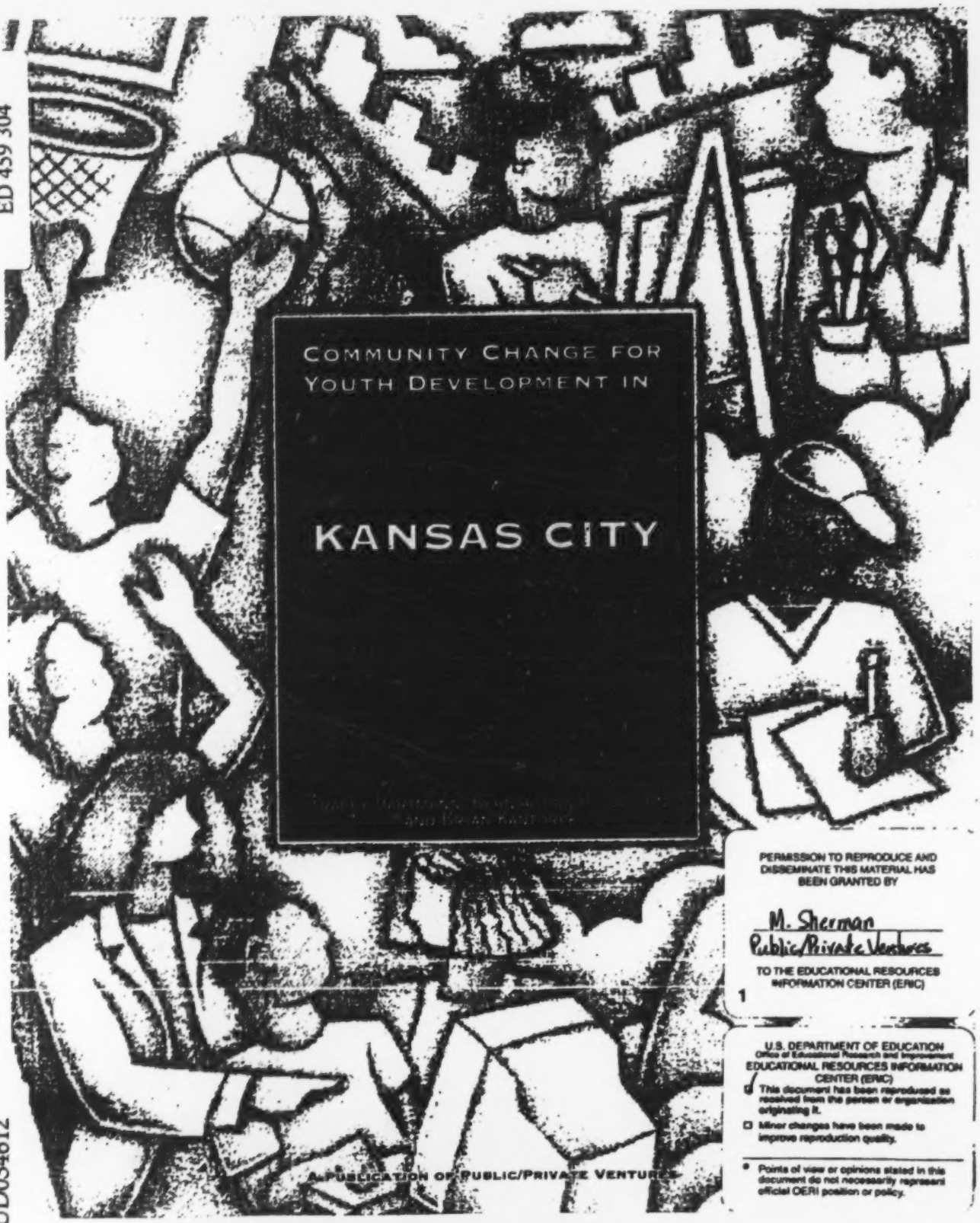

COMMUNITY CHANGE FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN

KANSAS CITY

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COMMUNITY CHANGE FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN

KANSAS CITY

A CASE STUDY OF HOW A TRADITIONAL YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATION (YMCA) BECOMES A COMMUNITY BUILDER

TRACEY HARTMANN, BERNARDINE H. WATSON AND BRIAN KANTOREK

P/PV

Public/Private Ventures is a national nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the effectiveness of social policies and programs. P/PV designs, tests and studies initiatives that increase supports, skills and opportunities of residents of low-income communities; works with policymakers to see that the lessons and evidence produced are reflected in policy; and provides training, technical assistance and learning opportunities to practitioners based on documented effective practices.

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Many colleagues at P/PV contributed their ideas and insights to this report. The research and technical assistance reports of Corina Chavez, Pat Ma, Yvonne Butler and Bob Penn of the Vanguard Management Group formed the basis for the conclusions presented here. The CCYD team read early drafts of the report and provided useful feedback. Bob Penn, Kathryn Furano, Karen Walker and Gary Walker all read several drafts of the report and provided significant guidance on its structure and content. Natalie Jaffe provided the editing, Patricia Wieland copyedited the report, and Maxine Sherman guided the report through the editing and publishing process with her customary attention to detail.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kansas City, Missouri, is one of six sites in a national demonstration project, Community Change for Youth Development (CCYD), that aims to increase basic developmental supports and opportunities available to youth aged 12 to 20. CCYD has been operating in Kansas City, Missouri, since the mid-1990s. The demonstratrion focuses on five basic elements: adult support and guidance; opportunities for involvement in decision-making; support through critical transitions; opportunities for using work as a developmental tool; and the provision of positive activities after school, in the evenings, on weekends and during the summer. Implementing youth programs in these five key developmental areas is the responsibility of a local lead agency working in cooperation with local residents and service providers. Across the sites, lead agencies include city governmental agencies, nonprofit community organizations and traditional youth-serving agencies. The lead agency in Kansas City is the YMCA of Greater Kansas City, a traditional youth-serving organization that is part of a national network. The benefits of working with the YMCA and the challenges faced by the organization in leading a community-based initiative in three urban Kansas City, Missouri, neighborhoods are the focus of this report.

Because of its considerable organizational capacity, the YMCA was successful in operating the CCYD initiative. Using its programming strength and experience, the YMCA was able to quickly implement CCYD activities, and easily expanded to additional neighborhoods as funding allowed. The organization's prior relationships with funders, primarily the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, have been critical to this expansion. Each neighborhood has used the CCYD framework to organize teen programming. In 2000, the YMCA reported serving approximately 700 youth in the three CCYD neighborhoods.

The challenges faced by the YMCA in implementing CCYD were twofold. Implementing the *work as a developmental tool* core concept proved difficult. It was an area in which the YMCA had little experience. Programs to fit this core concept were being developed at the time of publication of this report. Involving adult residents in the management and other aspects of CCYD programming, a key element of the initiative, was also difficult for the YMCA. First were the issues of capacity, turnover and burnout that come up in almost all resident involvement efforts. Other issues were related to the history and culture of the YMCA and its traditional relationship with the communities in which it operates. As a traditional youth-serving agency, the YMCA had not typically engaged community adults as partners in program development and operations. Staff expertise lay in youth programming rather than in developing resident involvement. In fact, the resident involvement component of CCYD has been most successful in Blue Hills, the community with the longest history of community organizing and the least YMCA infrastructure. Technical assistance was essential to helping YMCA staff implement Neighborhood Youth Development Committees (NYDCs), which are the main vehicles for resident involvement in each of the three target neighborhoods.

The YMCA of Greater Kansas City has demonstrated that with commitment and the right kind of technical assistance, a traditional youth-serving agency can successfully lead a youth-focused, community-change effort that involves local citizens in oversight and in shaping program offerings. CCYD has become a central element in the YMCA's youth development programming approach and as the initiative enters its sixth year, its prospects for sustainability look promising. It has continued to receive funding from the Kauffman Foundation, including funds to work with the YMCA in Kansas City, Kansas, and expand CCYD into eight neighborhoods there. In addition, the original CCYD coordinator has been promoted to vice president within the YMCA and is integrating the CCYD framework into YMCA programming throughout the Greater Kansas City organization. Finally, the YMCA has begun to form an overarching governance board that will bring in prominent individuals from the public and private sectors as advocates for the initiative. CCYD, through the YMCA, has increased the quantity and quality of youth development supports in Kansas City, and all indicators suggest that these will survive beyond the demonstration period.

INTRODUCTION

This report examines the implementation of a community-based strategy for enhancing youth development at one of six sites in a national demonstration project: Community Change for Youth Development (CCYD). The initiative, designed by Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) in the early 1990s, endeavors to draw together local institutional, human and financial resources to enhance the capacity of urban communities to support the successful growth and development of young people aged 12 to 20.

By the early 1990s, it had become clear that the short-term programming that characterized the youth field was not sufficient to address the spectrum of developmental needs of large numbers of American youth. In addition, although evaluations of youth-focused demonstration programs often showed positive short-term outcomes, long-term changes were not being achieved by these short-term programs (Walker and Villela-Vilez, 1992). Given these findings, P/PV hypothesized that if crucial supports and opportunities could be increased and maintained for youth in their communities- especially in poor communities in which large numbers of families lack the financial or social capital to provide those opportunities to young people- the number of youth who grow up to be healthy, productive adults would also increase. P/PV, therefore, designed CCYD to involve a wide range of key community players who could work together to fill critical gaps in existing services for youth, and who could build on the community's assets to create structures and processes that would take root and endure. CCYD's approach is community centered: it aims to influence the neighborhoods, institutions and human interactions that surround young people so that the communities in which they mature are rich with developmental opportunities and healthy pathways to adulthood.

In the mid-1990s, P/PV began operating CCYD in selected neighborhoods in five cities across the United States: Austin, Texas; Savannah, Georgia; St. Petersburg, Florida; Kansas City, Missouri; and the Lower East Side of New York City. A sixth neighborhood in the borough of Staten Island, New York City, joined the initiative in the late 1990s.

To provide the sites with a framework around which to organize CCYD activities, P/PV articulated five youth development principles, called core concepts, that research and common sense indicate are essential elements for the healthy growth and development of young people. These core concepts reflect normal adolescent developmental opportunities that, when absent from a young person's life inhibit their efforts to become vital, productive adults. The core concepts are as follows:

- ***Adult support and guidance***- opportunities for youth to receive support and guidance from caring adults;
- ***Gap activities***- opportunities for youth to engage in constructive activities in the non-school hours, such as after school and during the summer;
- ***Work as a developmental tool (or "work-learning")***- opportunities for youth to engage in work activities that promote learning, progressive skill development and career exploration;
- ***Involvement in decision-making***- opportunities for youth to be actively involved in decisions that affect them and to interact positively with peers in making such decisions; and
- ***Support through critical transitions***- opportunities for youth to receive support as they move through critical transition periods, such as from middle school to high school and from school to work.

The number of core concepts reflects both that youth development needs are not narrow- a one-element program is insufficient- and that a community-based youth development approach must be possible to implement in a reasonable period of time, and should therefore not attempt to be comprehensive and address *all* youth's needs. Although the core concepts

are not designed to represent all the supports youth need, they do respond to major needs that many young people have. P/PV also selected this set of supports for two additional reasons: they appeared to be supports that could be implemented without a great deal of internal institutional change (i.e., school reform); and taken together, they are particularly important to many adolescents who, as they move through their teens, increasingly rely on external supports in addition to those provided by their families.

P/PV was sensitive to the fact that many community initiatives become bogged down during the planning process when there is little consensus about what the goals of the initiative should be. The five core concepts were supposed to represent a "middle ground" that would provide sites with a way to prioritize and make choices about their overall youth development goals, while at the same time allowing them the latitude to develop strategies and programs to meet their local needs and conditions.

Adjustments to fit local needs as well as the direction and implementation of the framework were to be crafted by local institutions and community residents. Resident involvement is an idea that has resurfaced periodically in community initiatives throughout the twentieth century. Proponents believe that interventions led entirely by entities outside the communities in which the target population resides often do not have lasting effects. Thus, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a number of community-centered interventions were implemented, focusing on areas that include youth development, neighborhood revitalization, school reform and social service integration. Central to these projects has been the notion that improving the lives of those in impoverished communities requires strengthening the community infrastructure and capacity of community resources- institutions and residents- to help shape, plan, implement and sustain local change. Community residents can contribute an insider's view of the community's strengths and needs, as well as access to social net works that facilitate buy-in and legitimacy. In CCYD, the involvement of community residents in the initiative was expected to occur in a number of ways. A local governance board that involved community residents was a common approach across the demonstration. This board played roles ranging from an advisory capacity to actual governance. In addition, adult residents were often involved as participants in programming, in line with one of CCYD's core tenets- youth's ongoing need for positive adult support and guidance.

Although efforts at community-based change enjoy considerable support in philanthropy and among federal agencies, useful information about how to effectively implement these initiatives and about their impacts has been scarce. Prior to implementing CCYD, P/PV examined other initiatives and concluded that management by a strong and established local agency would be critical to facilitating community change. This report examines how that decision played out in the case of one site, Kansas City, Missouri (KCMO). The lead agency chosen for the Kansas City site is the YMCA of Greater Kansas City, a well-known and well-regarded institution with a 140-year history in the community, and a presence in both urban and suburban neighborhoods.

While the Kansas City example reflects aspects of CCYD that are common to all sites, each initiative unfolded in a different way. Implementation of the initiative in six cities- each with unique resources, needs and dynamics- allowed us to study how the framework adapted to fit local realities. Schorr (1997) argues that the adaptability of successful initiatives is an important question often overlooked by public policy. Initiatives that are successful in one context often fail when an attempt is made to replicate them in other settings. The CCYD demonstration has permitted us to observe the framework's adaptation across diverse settings and to document the varied approaches to community change taken by different types of lead agencies.

The YMCA of Greater Kansas City is unique to the initiative: it is a traditional youth-serving organization with a national "brand name." On the face of it, a large youth-serving organization with a national name would seem to offer benefits for CCYD, such as financial and human resources, as well as credibility. This report examines the Kansas City CCYD site to see whether, in fact, these benefits have been realized. It also examines whether having such a well-established organization act as lead agency creates other challenges for an initiative aiming to change some of the traditional ways that resources and services for youth are allocated and delivered.[1] The questions to be addressed include:

- How did unique characteristics of the city, neighborhood and lead agency shape CCYD in Kansas City, Missouri?
- To what extent and in what ways was the YMCA able to involve adult residents in the initiative?
- How did the CCYD framework enhance or add to the provision of developmental opportunities for youth in CCYD neighborhoods?
- What are the prospects of sustaining the KCMO CCYD beyond the demonstration phase, and how does having a lead agency like the YMCA affect sustainability?

Our answers to these questions are based on data collected over the life of the initiative and include summaries of site visits by operations and research staff, technical assistance reports, monthly phone interviews with the project director, program planning documents, reports to funders, memoranda of agreement and written correspondence between the site and P/PV.

The second section of this report describes the local context, including citywide dynamics, neighborhood characteristics and the organizational characteristics of the YMCA of Greater Kansas City. The third section discusses the development of resident involvement strategies in the context of the YMCA. The fourth section describes the activities created for youth in each of the five key developmental areas and analyzes how the YMCA's expertise and philosophy shaped programming. The fifth section looks ahead to prospects for sustaining the initiative and summarizes the lessons that can be learned from the Kansas City experience.

LOCAL INFLUENCES: THE CITY, AGENCY AND NEIGHBORHOOD

As has been the case in the other five sites, KCMO CCYD has been distinctively shaped by the participating public and private agencies, and by the neighborhoods in which it developed and their residents. As one would expect, the initiative found unique opportunities and challenges in KCMO, which are explored in this section.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN KANSAS CITY

In the late 1980s, an increase in gang activity began to draw Kansas City's attention to the needs of its youth. YouthNet, a coalition of youth development organizations partially funded by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, was organized to increase community-based programming and services for high-risk youth in the after-school and evening hours. In the early 1990s, Kansas City Consensus, a civic organization that aims to involve grassroots leadership in public policy formation, asked thousands of citizens to envision the future of the metropolitan area and concluded that increased opportunities for youth needed to be a clear priority. Citizens expressed their desire to see Greater Kansas City become the "child opportunity capital, where the quality of our children's future is the measure of our success" (Kansas City Consensus, 1993).

Following up on this declaration, YouthNet convened several Youth Summit meetings in which youth-serving institutions gathered to respond to these challenges. The group adopted a series of principles, which included a commitment to make positive youth development a priority for their organizations. They agreed to consult and cooperate with each other on the development of new youth initiatives and to share information about their work through regular contact among the staff of each organization. In addition, the mayor at that time, Emmanuel Cleaver, made youth a priority of his administration and started several programs, including "Mayor's Night Hoops" and "Hot Summer Nights" to occupy youth in the evenings.

All of this attention and support for youth development created a fertile climate for the development of CCYD. By the time CCYD implementation began, project staff perceived a heightened public understanding and awareness of the need for youth development and youth development agencies. In addition, these previous efforts primed youth agencies to collaborate with each other.

However, even though philosophical support for youth development was strong in KCMO prior to CCYD, the city faced several challenges to increasing developmental supports. Until recently, KCMO had used a system of court-ordered busing that worked against efforts to engage youth in neighborhood-based programs because youth spent much of their time at schools in other parts of the city. In addition, like many urban communities, the urban core of KCMO has a high percentage of rental housing and highly transient families. Transience makes it difficult for youth programs to engage youth over the long term. So although the context for youth development was promising, the context for neighborhood-based programming was less promising, which was one reason why the CCYD approach garnered so much interest.

YMCA OF GREATER KANSAS CITY AS A CCYD LEAD AGENCY

The planning and early implementation of CCYD in Kansas City occurred under the direction of YouthNet, the nonprofit technical assistance provider for youth-serving agencies in Jackson County, Missouri. It was YouthNet's original intention to oversee the local CCYD initiative and work with the YMCA to implement the initiative in Blue Hills. However, after the first year of the local initiative, YouthNet began to focus its organizational resources on best practices training and quality assurance services to local youth organizations, and the YMCA took on the role of lead agency.

The YMCA of Greater Kansas City brought significant strengths to the CCYD initiative. First, it had considerable capacity in management, outreach, planning and fundraising. The YMCA of Greater Kansas City- which encompasses Kansas City, Missouri; Kansas City, Kansas; and suburban areas- has a 140-year history in the community and 12 facilities, seven of which are in the city of KCMO.[3] Services at the YMCA of Greater Kansas City reach preschool children through senior citizens. As an "affiliate" of a national organization, it has high name recognition and credibility with funders and communities. The YMCA's organizational capacity was significant because in neighborhoods where its facilities existed, new youth programs could be put in place relatively quickly. Even more significant, the network of facilities created an infrastructure through which the initiative could easily expand when new funding opportunities arose.

Fundraising capacity was also important because initial funding from P/PV was intentionally modest. Site grants were considered seed money, and lead agencies were expected to contribute matching funds. For example, the relationship the YMCA had developed with the Kauffman Foundation prior to CCYD became central to the success of the initiative. However, the YMCA's fundraising capacity also presented a challenge: an agency as large as the YMCA has many competing funding priorities. In order to benefit from its fundraising resources, CCYD had to remain visible within the regional YMCA organization.

Another strength of the YMCA was its experience with and support for youth development principles. A 1997 P/PV study on voluntary youth-serving organizations, including the YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs and Girls, Inc., found that a majority of YMCA youth reported experiencing significant developmental opportunities with the help of YMCAs (Gambone and Arbreton, 1997). The YMCA of the USA has identified seven developmental needs for youth (physical activity, competence and achievement, self-definition, creative expression, positive social interactions with peers and adults, structure and clear limits, and meaningful participation) that it recommends as the basis of programming for adolescents. These developmental needs coincide well with the CCYD core concepts and, therefore, created synergy between the YMCA's youth development mission and the CCYD approach.

However, the traditional youth-serving nature of the YMCA made it difficult for CCYD to distinguish itself as a new and unique approach within the organization. Although CCYD and the YMCA have similar missions, they are also distinct in important ways. CCYD asked the YMCA to expand its youth development programming to include youth involvement in decision-making, career and employment programming, and support during the important transitions of adolescence. The CCYD framework also gives a substantial role to community residents for decision-making about youth programming in their neighborhoods. In contrast, although the YMCA's motto includes a community focus ("We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities"), it has historically promoted the individual development of children, youth and adults through recreational and educational programming. Its typical relationship with the community is as educator and "safe haven," and it was perceived as a service provider to the community rather than as an agency with which community residents would partner for broader community change. Although the YMCA had worked with volunteer advisory boards prior to CCYD, it had never worked with a neighborhood group- such as the one suggested by CCYD's framework- in which residents are given the opportunity to make decisions about youth programming in their community. To carry out CCYD, the YMCA had to alter its relationships with residents.

Neighborhood Selection and Resources

Although 11 neighborhoods in Greater Kansas City would eventually become involved in the CCYD initiative, the first three neighborhoods to participate are the focus of this report.[3] The Blue Hills neighborhood began planning for CCYD in 1995, with implementation in 1996; 49/63 and the Linwood YMCA areas were then added to the initiative in 1997.

The selection of neighborhoods is an important decision in a community-based initiative. Schorr (1997) states that neighborhoods demonstrating a need as well as an advanced level of organization (in which neighbors know each other and have worked together on community issues) are the best candidates for a community-driven initiative. For this reason, KCMO CCYD initially looked for communities interested in organizing and prioritizing youth development resources, using the CCYD core concepts, as well as those with some capacity to participate in a community-driven initiative. The Blue Hills neighborhood met both of these criteria. It was selected as the first CCYD neighborhood through a community-planning process convened by YouthNet; the planners included representatives from the City Parks and Recreation Department, the United Way, Boys & Girls Club, the Kansas City Ministerial Alliance, the Housing Authority, the Kansas City Full Employment Council, Southwestern Bell, the City Council, the Greater Kansas City YMCA, the Kauffman Foundation and P/PV.

In 1997, when the Kauffman Foundation awarded the YMCA of Greater Kansas City funds to expand the initiative, YouthNet was no longer leading the project. The community planning group had disbanded and expansion neighborhoods were chosen at the YMCA's discretion. The YMCA decided to expand into the 49/63 neighborhood and the neighborhoods surrounding the Linwood YMCA. Central to this decision was the fact that these communities had the YMCA facilities to support such expansion. At the same time, they were neighborhoods deemed in need of additional youth development resources.

The three neighborhoods differed in the amount and nature of community organizing that had taken place prior to CCYD. Blue Hills had been receiving resources for community organizing since the early 1990s through Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance, a local not-for-profit organization committed to neighborhood capacity building; as a result, Blue Hills had formed many neighborhood groups from which to draw leadership and community input. Neither 49/63 nor the Linwood area had the same degree of neighborhood organization that existed in Blue Hills. 49/63 had one neighborhood association in place when CCYD was initiated, but community youth development was not on its agenda. As a result, it took some time to engage the group and get them on board with CCYD. The area targeted by the Linwood YMCA, in contrast, is made up of several neighborhoods immediately surrounding its facility. As a result, additional community research was required to learn more about the active neighborhood groups from which CCYD could draw.

The neighborhoods also varied in the availability of youth development facilities. Excluding schools, Blue Hills had no such facilities. The closest youth facility was the Forest Avenue YMCA, located in the 49/63 neighborhood across a large four-lane highway, which made it difficult for Blue Hills youth to access. Therefore, youth had few facilities in which to gather during out-of-school time.

In 49/63, the Forest Avenue YMCA was the only youth-serving agency. Housed in a former church, it offered a gym, some computers, and meeting and activity rooms. The Forest Avenue facility did not allow for the extent of services provided by most YMCAs, but it was undoubtedly a safe haven for neighborhood youth.

CCYD Neighborhoods

Blue Hills

The Blue Hills neighborhood encompasses a 173-square block area of south-central KCMO. Two thousand residents- 17 percent of the total- were between the ages of 12 and 20 in 1994. Blue Hills is an economically diverse and predominantly African-American neighborhood. In 1994, the poverty rate was 24.4 percent; Blue Hills was also home to middle- and upper-middle-class professionals who had chosen to remain in the community. A 1995 community survey conducted through AmeriCorps found that 72.6 percent of the neighborhood perceived the community to be unsafe for reasons connected to youth issues, such as drug involvement, unsupervised or idle behavior, vandalism and gangs. In addition, schools were the only youth-serving facilities in the neighborhood prior to CCYD.

49/63

The neighborhood known as 49/63 (bounded by 49th and 63rd streets) is served by the Forest Avenue YMCA. It is adjacent to Blue Hills and is also economically diverse and predominantly African American. Thirty-four percent of 49/63's population were children and youth in 1992; 25.8 percent of households were headed by women and the poverty rate was 53 percent, higher than the citywide average. The YMCA is the only youth-serving facility in the community.

Linwood YMCA Area

The area immediately surrounding the Linwood YMCA was designated as the CCYD catchment area. Like Blue Hills and 49/63, the community is economically diverse and predominantly African American. The 1990 Census reported that this area had a 34 percent poverty rate, and 22 percent of families were headed by women. Nonetheless, 60 percent of the population earned above $40,000 annually. School district data from 1996 reveals that approximately 4,000 school-aged children lived within one mile of the Linwood YMCA. A 1997 P/PV study of voluntary youth-serving organizations, in which the Linwood YMCA participated, found that 60 percent of male youth and 35 percent of female youth attending the YMCA were at risk for alcohol and drug use, arrests and/or gang membership.

The Linwood area had the greatest number of youth-serving agencies, although the Linwood YMCA was the only facility in its community that had a teen center and extended hours of operation. The Linwood YMCA was also a newer facility that offered a pool, gym," teen room," computer room, meeting rooms and YMCA administrative offices.

The facilities of Linwood and Forest Avenue allowed programming to get on the ground quickly. In addition, facilities made participant recruitment easier: youth and parents recognize these buildings as safe havens and seek them out. Initial programming in Blue Hills was hampered by the lack of a YMCA facility, so staff had to draw on neighborhood networks and other resources. The activities of CCYD have since led the YMCA to acquire a small space in the facility of another community organization in Blue Hills, which provides an office for the coordinator and some additional space for youth meetings.

In summary, the local context for implementing CCYD in KCMO contained unique supports as well as challenges. The philanthropic, organizational and local governmental endorsement of youth development provided a hospitable climate for pursuing the goals of CCYD at the citywide level. At the neighborhood level, however, a lack of infrastructure for youth development activities and the lack of prior community organizing presented obstacles for CCYD and required it to create an understanding of its goals among community residents and institutions before it could develop. In addition, the YMCA's institutional experience working with youth, as well as its history and presence in Blue Hills, 49/63 and the Linwood area, provided a stable foundation upon which to build CCYD. At the same time, CCYD challenged the YMCA of Greater Kansas City to expand their traditional approach to delivering youth development programming in urban areas.

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

As its name implies, Community Change for Youth Development has a dual focus. Its primary goal is to put youth development supports in place, but it does so through the involvement of a broad range of community members. As a community-change initiative, CCYD did not simply require the integration of new programs; it required a new approach to YMCA programming. Both YMCA staff and neighborhood representatives recognized that the involvement of neighborhood residents would distinguish a truly community-based initiative from just another new YMCA program. As one YMCA executive stated, "If it's truly community change, you can't do business like you're used to doing it."

The CCYD approach included the involvement of residents in planning, ongoing governance and decision-making, and volunteerism. All sites were encouraged to develop a neighborhood governance group that would include neighborhood residents and that could include representatives of important community institutions. The YMCA made a strong commitment to the community-based nature of the initiative and attempted to develop Neighborhood Youth Development Committees (NYDCs) in each of its CCYD neighborhoods. The development of these groups has been a slow and often erratic process.

Developing active neighborhood participation in planning and decision-making is often a slow process. Volunteer time for residents of low-income communities is often scarce, while the demand for their participation in community activities is great.

Community leaders and other active residents may be over-committed and lack availability for yet another cause. In addition, some residents may lack experience with the type of planning, decision-making and budgeting required. It is often difficult to develop the skills and capacities of these individuals while simultaneously forming the group and developing the initiative.

Typically, neighborhood involvement efforts may experience early success in getting residents to participate in design and planning activities, but may find it difficult to sustain involvement once the initiative begins (Walker, Watson and Jucovy, 1999). The KCMO CCYD initiative has not been unique in this regard. However, the experience of the YMCA offers some insight into the unique barriers to developing community governance within traditional youth-serving organizations.

One of these barriers arose as a result of the closely aligned missions of CCYD and the YMCA. While both programs have a youth development focus, some early work needed to be done with both staff and residents to recognize that CCYD brought something new to the YMCA. The difficulty in distinguishing between CCYD and "just another new YMCA program" surfaced in two ways. Even though the YMCA was a community institution, parents in communities with YMCA facilities (Linwood and Forest Avenue) had not traditionally been expected to play a greater role in decision-making about youth programming. In response to CCYD, the YMCA had to alter parents' expectations about their role in the YMCA. And, CCYD staff- particularly those who came from a traditional youth-worker background- required time to understand the community change aspect of CCYD. Initially, they tended to focus more energy on youth programming, which they understood, than on the development of resident involvement in planning and implementation, in which they had little experience.

Each neighborhood formed an NYDC designed to involve residents in planning, implementation and decision-making about youth development activities in their neighborhoods. Because each neighborhood is different and each entered the initiative at different points in time, each NYDC developed in a unique way.

Neighborhood Youth Development Committees

The first CCYD neighborhood in Kansas City was Blue Hills, and it developed in a context of greater autonomy from the YMCA during planning and early implementation than did the other two neighborhoods.

Greater autonomy resulted from both the nature of the planning phase- which occurred through a community coalition spearheaded by YouthNet- and the limited YMCA infrastructure in the Blue Hills neighborhood, which required CCYD to work more closely with the neighborhood to find facilities and support for its programming. CCYD in Blue Hills was more community based from the start.

The implementation of CCYD in Blue Hills was unique in that much of the planning happened through a community-wide group not under the direct oversight of the YMCA. When Blue Hills was selected as the primary CCYD neighborhood, YouthNet organized a design team to develop a plan and invited youth and adult residents of Blue Hills- as well as other community representatives- to participate. Therefore, planning benefited from a range of expertise and perspectives on Blue Hills and did not have a focus specific to the YMCA.

In addition, the first Blue Hills CCYD coordinator came from outside the YMCA. Her first day on the job was spent at a CCYD cross-site conference at which she was able to hear about the development of CCYD in other cities around the country. When CCYD became a YMCA initiative in Year II, the coordinator had already spent a year working autonomously in Blue Hills. Her strategy for implementing CCYD made resident involvement in all aspects of the initiative a priority.

Because Blue Hills lacked a YMCA facility, public spaces such as schools and parks, as well as the Forest Avenue YMCA, were used as sites for programming. Without a facility to visibly tie the initiative to the YMCA, it developed a distinctively neighborhood-based character. For example, the initiative worked closely with other community-change efforts such as Blue Hills Together and the Block Leaders initiative.[4] The coordinator also sat on numerous neighborhood committees in an attempt to develop support for CCYD and made the development of an NYDC an early priority. Distance from YMCA resources and structure may have allowed, indeed required, greater community involvement in programming than the other neighborhoods would later experience.

Finally, several key CCYD staff members, including AmeriCorps volunteers[5] who participated in program activities, were from Blue Hills. They were able to help the initiative develop credibility in Blue Hills, while connecting CCYD to important neighborhood groups. Having staff from the neighborhood made the initiative even more visible to residents.

Because of these factors, the Blue Hills NYDC quickly became an active group; in 1997, it had 22 to 25 members. They were involved in the planning and implementation of program activities and were beginning to discuss how they could play a role in the allocation of project resources. They defined their roles to include "monitoring the initiative," "holding people accountable," "setting policy" and "dealing with the budget."

Blue Hills found it relatively easy to recruit NYDC members, but the site also found that it was difficult to maintain members' interest in CCYD between NYDC meetings. As a result, it created volunteer opportunities for residents to keep them engaged. Individuals were assigned specific tasks between governance meetings and were invited to develop and lead programs. While, in other CCYD sites, adults did not begin to take on volunteer roles until later in the initiative (Walker, Watson and Jucovy, 1999), KCMO neighborhood adults were proposing ideas for activities and were organizing and staffing them in Year I. These included a Summer Olympics event, a "charm school" for girls, a survival skills workshop and a teen pregnancy workshop. Through the volunteer approach- getting adults involved in concrete tasks- a core group of committed adults emerged by the end of Year I. The creation of volunteer activities proved effective in maintaining resident interest in the program.

In contrast to Blue Hills, the development of NYDCs was more challenging in the 49/63 and Linwood neighborhoods. When the initiative expanded into

these communities in 1997, the new CCYD coordinators encountered neighborhoods with few organized groups, none of which had participated in the original design phase of CCYD. The new staff tended to have more experience working with traditional youth programs and, unlike the original Blue Hills coordinator, the new coordinators at the Blue Hills, Forest Avenue and Linwood facilities relied heavily on their traditional youth-worker expertise to launch CCYD. Activity programming then began to take priority over the development of neighborhood councils. At the same time, operating within a YMCA facility gave the initiative a facility-based feel. Neighborhood residents had more difficulty feeling that they owned CCYD and distinguishing it from a typical YMCA program.

Current Status of Resident Involvement

While the YMCA was willing to work with neighborhood groups in planning and decision-making, developing groups of this type was a new experience. Technical assistance was therefore critical to the development of the NYDCs. As part of its first CCYD expansion grant to the YMCA in 1997, the Kauffman Foundation secured an experienced management consultant, who had helped to develop the national CCYD initiative, to work with the YMCA to develop the KCMO local effort. In the past three years, five training retreats have brought together staff and NYDC members from all three neighborhoods to help them identify and develop consensus around initiative priorities. Through these retreats and other workshops, the NYDCs received training designed to help each of them develop a vision and clarify roles, responsibilities and procedures for working as a committee.

In an August 1999 technical assistance retreat, the YMCA's CCYD implementation team decided to take a big step toward increased resident involvement in the management of CCYD and set goals for ceding greater decision-making authority to the NYDCs. The YMCA team made a commitment to allow NYDCs to design the 2001 program budget and planned to allow them decision-making and purchasing power by that time. The YMCA retained the right to sign off on specific spending decisions, grant final approval on the entire budget and maintain control of a small percentage of the budget that is allocated to the YMCA for administrative purposes.

But, despite this decision, the transition of significant management authority to the NYDCs was never fully realized. Transitions among staff and NYDC members slowed the development of the groups. But more important and in reality, the NYDC members were more comfortable with a traditional advisory role; they wanted to have input into the budget but did not want to manage it. In December 2000, at another training retreat, the YMCA CCYD team officially revised its earlier goals with regard to the NYDCs. The role of all three NYDCs was formally established as one in which they would work with YMCA staff to develop the program budget and have input into other management decisions, but they would focus primarily on organizing and supporting youth development activities in the local neighborhoods.

By spring of 2000, all three NYDCs were meeting regularly. They each had a similar number of members (between 9 and 13), including youth and adults, and were developing rules about their ongoing operations. Again, because of the neighborhood-based development of CCYD in Blue Hills, that neighborhood's NYDC had made the most progress; it had developed rules about membership and had developed a leadership structure that included both youth and adult officers. Blue Hills and 49/63 had also begun to participate with the YMCA in setting up community partnerships for the delivery of activities and negotiating memoranda of agreement with their partners.

In addition, and again with technical assistance, the YMCA began to focus its efforts on developing an overarching governance board viewed as vital to the sustainability of the initiative. This board will include adult and youth representation from the neighborhoods as well as individuals representing city government, education, churches and other institutions that

work with youth. It will oversee the NYDCs and involve them in the process of building partnerships and accessing resources for CCYD throughout the community. This group will also be involved in broad planning and monitoring of youth programming throughout the Community Development Division of the YMCA.

In conclusion, the resident involvement component of CCYD, particularly in the form of resident decision-making, has been challenging for the KCMO YMCA to implement. In addition to the traditional difficulties this type of effort usually presents, the YMCA's culture, institutional structures, previous relationships with neighborhoods and residents, and staff training simply did not support it. Even in the Blue Hills neighborhood, which has the least YMCA infrastructure and a strong history of community organizing, the NYDC now functions primarily in an advisory capacity. At the same time, through technical assistance, the YMCA has committed itself to resident involvement in CCYD and to support of the NYDCs as a strategy for helping them to stay connected to the neighborhoods. Residents continue to be actively involved in programming, planning and implementation, although the NYDCs have not taken on the management of budgets or other administrative tasks.

PROGRAMMING FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

In spite of the challenges that the resident involvement component of CCYD presented for the YMCA, using the core concepts to develop new and expand existing youth development programming in the target communities has gone relatively well. As mentioned throughout this report, two of the Greater Kansas City YMCA's basic characteristics made the organization a compatible home for CCYD. The first is the YMCA's dedication to and experience with youth development. The organization's youth programming philosophy is very much in concert with the CCYD approach. The second characteristic is the YMCA's strong infrastructure, which includes its facilities, staff, local contacts and other resources, all of which have helped to guide the efficient implementation of CCYD activities in the three participating KCMO neighborhoods.

At the same time, court-ordered busing and the transience of the low-income neighborhoods remained a challenge to CCYD's efforts to involve youth in its defined geographic target area. Many youth living in target areas attended schools in other neighborhoods and, therefore, could not be reached through neighborhood schools and often spent less of their out-of-school time in their neighborhoods. In addition, staff informed us that they work diligently to recruit youth for activities during the school year and summer, only to find that- by the start of the next school year- many of these youth have moved.

Nonetheless, between 1999 and 2000, the KCMO CCYD initiative served over 1,200 youth across the three target neighborhoods.[4] Some of that activity was in two core concept areas: *adult support and guidance* and *gap programming*, areas in which the YMCA was already delivering strong programming before CCYD was implemented. But the YMCA has worked to enhance those offerings using the CCYD approach. Over the course of the demonstration, the YMCA and its local partners have also worked to develop activities in the three other core concept areas. Below is an assessment of how that integration process has worked.

PRE-EXISTING STRENGTHS: *GAP PROGRAMMING AND ADULT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE*

Providing youth with constructive activities, such as athletics and arts and crafts, during gap periods has traditionally been part of the YMCA's programming approach. CCYD has influenced how staff implement activities in these areas and helped to expand the types of activities offered.

For example, a key concern of YMCA staff and the NYDCs across the three neighborhoods has been how to infuse existing gap activities with more youth development principles and opportunities. At the Forest Avenue YMCA in the 49/63 neighborhood, for instance, gym activities are the major attraction. In an effort to discourage youth from merely wandering into the gym to shoot some hoops and then leave, staff have established such activities as three-on-three basketball tournaments, which promote teamwork skills. Computers are also available at the same time that the gym is open, and youth are encouraged to use them to help generate flyers to promote and raise funds for activities that the youth themselves develop. In the Linwood YMCA gym activities, staff now emphasize constructive problem solving to resolve disagreements among youth and between youth and adults; and in Blue Hills, a long-time drill team has been enhanced by creating more opportunities for youth leadership and decision-making.

Working together, the YMCA staff and NYDC volunteers have developed other gap activities as a result of CCYD. For example, a Summer Olympics event has been started in Blue Hills and a photojournalism group sponsored by the Society of Contemporary Photography now meets in and uses the dark room at the neighborhood's Paseo High School of Fine Arts. The Forest Avenue YMCA has started current events and book clubs and sponsors black history activities. The Linwood YMCA has added creative writing and community gardening to its youth activities.

Efforts to implement all of the five core concepts have also added to the variety of gap activities available across the YMCA facilities. Youth leadership activities such as the CCYD Youth Council *(youth involvement)*; gender-based workshops that support youth through the changes of adolescence *(support through critical transitions)*; and activities such as homework assistance, computer lab, photography and drama classes, and other enrichment activities staffed by adult volunteers, including elders *(adult support and guidance)*, expand the number of program options available to youth during non-school hours.

Strong, positive relationships between YMCA staff and youth who participate in activities have also traditionally been a key focus of the organization's programming. This focus has been strengthened by CCYD's deliberate emphasis on this issue. In addition, there were specific programs both in YMCA facilities and the target communities, prior to the implementation of CCYD, that laid the groundwork for developing new adult-youth relationship activities. Under YouthNet's leadership in 1994, the Blue Hills and 49/63 neighborhoods implemented the Block Leaders program, which paired neighborhood-based youth advocates with at-risk youth. Although the program no longer exists, some of the advocates that were originally involved now participate in other neighborhood activities that directly support young people. At the Forest Avenue YMCA, Adults In Mentoring (AIM) for youth began operating prior to CCYD and has been integrated with the CCYD approach as part of the YMCA's effort to use the core concepts as the overarching framework for the organization's youth programing.

To these pre-existing *adult support and guidance* activities, the YMCA has added the federally funded Experience Corps program. Experience Corps works with community seniors, aged 55 and up, to provide CCYD youth with the opportunity to get to know seniors and build meaningful friendships with them. Experience Corps members participate in activities with youth in each of the three KCMO CCYD neighborhoods, including many of the regularly offered gap programs discussed above and such occasional events as the Senior Prom, an intergenerational activity in which youth act as chaperones to the elders.

New Developments: *Youth Involvement in Decision-Making, Support in Times of Transition* and *Work as a Developmental Tool*

There are three areas in which the YMCA has not traditionally offered programming. In order to begin developing activities in these areas, the YMCA staff and volunteers across the three neighborhoods have had to gain a clear understanding of the meaning of each concept; be exposed to program examples that addressed the concepts, including activities being delivered at other CCYD sites; and partner with other organizations that might have ideas and resources that could be useful to activity development.

Regarding *youth involvement in decision-making*, the YMCA is working to integrate this concept into all of its programming, and the concept receives special emphasis in all CCYD activities. However, KCMO CCYD has also followed the lead of other initiative sites and used Youth Councils as a major vehicle for implementing this core concept. In fact, after getting off to a slow start because the local effort emphasizes (adult) resident involvement, the Youth Councils are now an active part of each of the three participating neighborhoods' strategies. Councils meet weekly to develop suggestions for new core concept activities that would involve other youth in the community. Youth generally facilitate their own meetings, develop and present activity proposals to CCYD coordinators and other YMCA staff members, and work with staff to develop and implement the activities that everyone agrees should go forward. As a result of this process, the Youth Councils have initiated their own speakers' bureau, participated in community-service activities and organized fundraisers, field trips and social events. They also send youth representatives to NYDC meetings and are invited to attend NYDC training retreats.

One challenging aspect of KCMO's Youth Council strategy, however, is that unlike any of the other CCYD activities being implemented in the three neighborhoods, there are membership requirements. Early in the implementation of CCYD, YMCA staff and youth agreed on the stipulations of participation in the councils: participants must be committed to weekly meetings with YMCA staff to plan activities, set schedules and make decisions. Youth must also agree to take key roles in planned activities and to attend retreats and other meetings as necessary. Not surprisingly, these rules limit the number of youth that get actively involved in the councils.

Activities representing support for youth during times of transition have not been widespread because it took time for the YMCA and its staff to grasp how the concept could be locally implemented. The KCMO site is not alone in this regard; most of the CCYD sites had trouble putting this concept into practice. Over time, two gender-based activities, Sista Sister and Boys II Men, have been developed in each neighborhood to help youth deal with the physical, emotional and cultural demands of adolescence and young adulthood. Participating youth meet weekly to attend workshops that deal with issues of health and sexuality, education, employment, etiquette, and ethics.

The YMCA has recently entered into a new partnership with Kansas State University to develop the "YMCA Scholars Program." The goal of the program is to assist at-risk and underrepresented youth from the Greater Kansas City area with the transition from high school to college or the labor market, or both. All participating youth will be assigned mentors, and their academic progress will be tracked throughout high school and, if they attend, college. Another goal is to elevate student, family and community expectations with regard to college attendance. During their senior year, 50 high school youth who participate will have an opportunity to apply for a two-week residency at Kansas State University. The YMCA is hoping that this activity will help attract more high school-aged youth to the initiative.

Like most of the other CCYD sites, the *work as a developmental tool* concept has been extremely challenging for the YMCA to implement. Many youth organizations have not had a great deal of experience in this area, and the YMCA is no exception. The YMCA's initial attempts to develop *work as a developmental tool* activities involved youth entrepreneurial ventures, such as a lawn mowing service, a teen store (which sells snacks and other items at the Linwood YMCA facility) and a youth newsletter that never came to fruition. This entrepreneurship strategy has also been tried in other CCYD sites, where, like the YMCA, the lead agency did not have solid contacts with the local employment and training bureaucracy, or in the private sector. However, no site, including KCMO has had a great deal of success or been able to involve a significant number of youth with this strategy. Other efforts to provide work-learning opportunities for youth have included a new baby sitting course sponsored by the American Red Cross and a youth speakers' bureau at which youth learn to make presentations and develop their speaking skills.

The YMCA is attempting to help build a work-learning system in Kansas City through participation in a Kauffman Foundation-funded program known as the Kansas City Quality Work-Based Learning Initiative. The goals of this initiative are to organize youth agencies in KCMO around a common set of career development and employment strategies for youth to provide a systemic approach to work-learning for adolescence that includes career exploration, job shadowing, mentoring, job-readiness training and work experience. It also encourages cooperation between community-based organizations and schools and provides technical assistance in work-based learning strategies to school administrators. The YMCA sees this initiative as the cental component of its CCYD-*work as a developmental tool* strategy and is developing plans for implementation.

The program implementation experience in KCMO indicates that so far the marriage between the YMCA and the CCYD framework has been a complementary one. As a traditional youth-serving agency, the YMCA brought youth development expertise and an infrastructure to the CCYD initiative. However, the CCYD core concepts called attention to ways in which a traditional youth-serving agency like the YMCA could enhance their existing youth development offerings and expand into areas that they have not typically addressed, thus expanding their reach into the community and increasing their ability to meet the developmental needs of adolescents.

PROSPECTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The YMCA as an institution is well-rooted in the larger Kansas City community and will endure, continuing to provide youth development opportunities throughout the region. However, the critical question is whether the changes brought about by the CCYD initiative and its framework will remain beyond the demonstration period. One of those changes is the YMCA's efforts, by using the CCYD approach, to increase the number of youth development opportunities available in urban communities in KCMO. Because of these efforts, more opportunities for youth development now exist in neglected urban areas of KCMO as the YMCA has been drawn into such communities as Blue Hills, in which it does not have a facility, or the other CCYD target neighborhoods, in which it has greatly expanded its offerings and involvement. In addition, CCYD has provided a framework through which all teen programming can be planned and organized. The framework encouraged the YMCA to develop such new programming areas as *youth involvement, support in times of transition* and *work as a developmental tool*. CCYD has also been the impetus for a new process of decision-making with regard to programming: it gave community residents an opportunity to decide what types of developmental supports for youth would exist in their neighborhoods. While it is certain that the YMCA will continue to provide youth development supports beyond the demonstration period, as it always has, will these distinguishing CCYD developments continue to be supported within the context of the YMCA after the demonstration period ends?

There are several reasons to be hopeful about the continuation of CCYD in KCMO. The first is the relationship between the YMCA of Greater Kansas City and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. The Kauffman Foundation has supported the YMCA in the growth and development of CCYD in KCMO and appears committed to helping to sustain the initiative. Recently, the Foundation awarded funds to the YMCA of Greater Kansas City and the YWCA in Kansas City, Kansas (KCK), to expand CCYD into eight KCK neighborhoods in which the YMCA and YWCA are working together to develop the initiative. With this expansion, there is now a regional network of CCYD neighborhoods that can generate momentum and support for the initiative, providing it with a more visible, secure place within the YMCA organization.

The promotion of the original Blue Hills coordinator, a champion of CCYD throughout her tenure, is also promising for the initiative's future. She was promoted to the position of YMCA of Greater Kansas City Vice President for Community Development in the fall of 2000. Through her leadership in the Community Development Division, the YMCA is now moving toward adopting the CCYD framework throughout the Greater Kansas City YMCA system. Each affiliate, in both the suburban and urban neighborhoods, will use the five core concepts to organize youth programming and will develop NYDCs to provide community direction to programming. Organization-wide adoption of the CCYD principles is one step toward institutionalization of CCYD within the YMCA.

As a part of this expansion of CCYD, the YMCA is developing an overarching governance board. The board's mission is to "support and enhance youth programming in the community development division." Its responsibilities are internally focused, including overseeing the NYDCs, integrating the core concepts into all youth programming, monitoring youth activities for "youth development quality control," linking with community resources, building partnerships, advocating for youth development with funders and others, and planning and creating new visions for youth development programming throughout the organization. The creation of this board helps to build the infrastructure within the institution to support CCYD. The board will also engage prominent champions, who can be advocates for the initiative both inside and outside the organization. The development of the governance board signifies another step toward institutionalizing CCYD within the YMCA.

CONCLUSIONS

The CCYD experience in three KCMO neighborhoods allows us to address the questions posed at the beginning of this report: How did the local context in Kansas City and the character of the YMCA as lead agency influence CCYD's development there? Was the YMCA able to involve adult residents from the target communities in the initiative? What was the value of the CCYD framework in providing developmental opportunities for youth in the target neighborhoods? What are the prospects for sustaining CCYD in KCMO?

Clearly, characteristics of Kansas City, the Greater Kansas City YMCA and the Blue Hills, 49/63 and Linwood neighborhoods greatly influenced the way in which CCYD developed in this site. By the time CCYD implementation began in 1996, Kansas City had already set a goal of becoming the "Child Opportunity Capital" of the United States; civic, foundation and governmental institutions had already started working toward that goal by directing increased financial and institutional resources to the issue. This made Kansas City fertile ground for the development of the CCYD initiative.

Having the YMCA as lead agency was the most important factor in shaping the initiative's development. P/PV's assumption that a strong lead agency is necessary to increasing supports for youth in their communities has been demonstrated in the case of the YMCA of Greater Kansas City. In fact it has been borne out across the sites in the CCYD national demonstration. The YMCA's physical infrastructure, experience in youth development, and credibility both at the neighborhood level and in the broader community were critical to CCYD's ability to take root and grow in Kansas City. The Kauffman Foundation's investment in the expansion of CCYD was clearly as much a vote of confidence in the YMCA's capacity to oversee the effort's implementation as it was a belief in the CCYD approach. Further, the fact that the Greater Kansas City YMCA, with its neighborhood-based affiliates, was able to expand CCYD to additional neighborhoods so quickly makes organizational networks like the YMCA seem an attractive choice for locating community-based initiatives.

The characteristics of the participating neighborhoods also point to the importance in community initiatives of selecting neighborhoods that have the capacity and resources to contribute to the effort. In this case, Blue Hills contributed a tradition of community organizing that brought energy and momentum to CCYD; and 49/63 and the Linwood area each had YMCA facilities that could be centerpieces for a community-based effort and other neighborhood groups that could be cultivated as partners. All of these resources meant that CCYD did not have to "start from scratch" in the effort to increase developmental opportunities for youth in these neighborhoods. Of course, there were also impediments to implementing CCYD in these neighborhoods. As discussed in the report, school busing, which took youth outside of their neighborhoods for significant periods, and family mobility- two issues that characterize many urban core neighborhoods- were often challenges to the CCYD neighborhood-based approach. These are issues that should be considered when designing future initiatives like CCYD with clearly defined geographical boundaries.

The YMCA's attempts to involve adult residents from the target neighborhoods in the CCYD initiative provide interesting lessons, both about the issue of resident involvement itself and the YMCA's- and possibly other traditional youth-serving organizations'- capacity in this area. The history of resident involvement in social policy initiatives indicates that it is very difficult to engage residents and sustain their involvement over time. Attempts to involve residents in governance and decision-making roles present particularly difficult issues, such as the capacity of residents to take on such roles and defining how residents and institutions should divide decision-making responsibilities.

As a traditional youth-serving organization, the YMCA had no experience with initiatives that called for resident decision-making and had to grapple with ways to find a "fit" for this component of CCYD with its institutional practices and culture. Further, even after technical assistance to help the YMCA and the target neighborhoods develop decision-making roles for residents, this type of involvement never came to fruition. Interestingly, even in the Blue Hills neighborhood in which there has been a tradition of community activism, the residents ultimately preferred the traditional relationship between their neighborhoods and the YMCA; they settled for roles as advisers to the CCYD effort. This experience indicates that when working in community-based initiatives, outside designers and technical assistance providers should attempt to build on local culture and community-level relationships that appear to work, even if it means altering the original initiative design somewhat. The experience in Kansas City and across the other five CCYD sites also shows that there are a variety of ways to effectively involve residents in community initiatives; and residents need to be given all of the options so they can decide which ones work best for them.

It appears that CCYD has been an effective tool for the YMCA to use in increasing developmental opportunities for youth in KCMO's urban core communities. While we cannot say for certain that more youth are participating in youth development activities in these target neighborhoods than before CCYD was implemented, we can point to the structural changes that the YMCA has made in its program delivery system and the growth in the quality and variety of activities that are now available as a result of CCYD. For example, across the three target neighborhoods the Greater Kansas City YMCA has used the CCYD core concepts to strengthen and expand the *adult support and guidance* and *gap activities* that were already being provided by their facilities and added new programming areas to respond to the issues of youth in transition and leadership development. The YMCA's plans to participate in the new Quality Work-Based Learning Initiative may be a solid strategy for addressing the *work as a developmental tool* concept, an area in which the YMCA has traditionally not offered youth programming.

The benefits of the CCYD framework seem most dramatic in Blue Hills, where the initiative has existed for the longest period and which had the fewest resources for youth prior to CCYD. New space has been acquired in the community to anchor the initiative and so that the YMCA can have a more visible presence there. The YMCA has also used the CCYD core concepts to create new youth programs in partnership with schools and other neighborhood institutions. Finally, as a result of CCYD, the YMCA has worked to intentionally connect Blue Hills youth to activities at the neighboring Forest Avenue facility.

With the association-wide adoption of the CCYD framework by the Community Development Division of the YMCA; the establishment of the Neighborhood Youth Development Committees, which anchor the YMCA in the community; and resources from the Kauffman Foundation to support ongoing expansion, the sustainability of CCYD in Kansas City appears likely. Further, it also appears, from the example of the Greater Kansas City YMCA, that a traditional youth-serving agency can successfully lead a youth-focused, community-change effort.

Endnotes

1 This case study does not attempt to address youth outcomes or youth experiences in Kansas City, Missouri, CCYD activities. Research responding to these questions was focused on three sites: Austin, St. Petersburg and Savannah.

2 In the spring of 2000, the YMCA of Greater Kansas City expanded its reach by merging with the YMCA of Kansas City, Kansas, of Wyandotte County.

3 Eight Kansas City, Kansas, neighborhoods had just received an implementation grant for CCYD at the time of this case study's publication. The YWCA of Kansas City, Kansas, will be the lead agency for six of the new communities, while the YMCA of Greater Kansas City will manage the additional two.

4 The AmeriCorps Blue Hills Together program brought block leaders, other neighborhood residents and nonprofit agencies together with the police to discuss safety issues in the community. YouthNet partnered with the YMCA to implement a Block Leaders program. Through Block Leaders, nine adults were paid to work with 40 youth for a year within designated blocks of Blue Hills.

5 Two AmeriCorps volunteers from the Blue Hills Together program were assigned to focus on youth through CCYD in the first year of the program.

6 Since KCMO is not the focus of an "intensive" CCYD research site, we do not have extensive youth participation data for this site. The youth participation data provided here are estimates submitted from the YMCA.

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